

cided preference over the enemeta. The nature of the difficulty, also warrants the view of its utility. The tendency of the peristaltic motion and of the ingesta, is from above, downwards; most cases of intussusception, therefore, are *progressivæ*, few *retrogradæ*. If then, we can dilate the stricture, the invaginated portion will escape from below upwards, and thus will be restored to its original situation. If the above explanation be correct, what remedy can compete with inflation? It certainly merits a trial, and is earnestly recommended to the consideration of the profession.—*Boston Medical and Surgical Journal and Med. Mag.* Dec. 15th, 1834.

On the Plant which furnishes the Jalap. By R. E. GRIFFITH, M. D.—The first author who speaks of jalap in a definite manner, is Caspar Bauhin, in 1609, (*Pinax*. 298. *Prod. Theat. bot.* 135,) under the name of *Bryonia mechoacana nigricans*. But succeeding botanists appear to have been in a state of great uncertainty as to the plant furnishing this root. Ray, (*Hist. Plant.* 724,) refers it to the genus *convolvulus* under the name of *C. Americanus jalapium dictus*; in this he was followed by Plukenet, (*Phytog. Tab.* f. 1.)

Some time afterwards, Tournefort, misled by Plumier and Lignon, who stated that they had seen the plant in America, attributed the jalap to a species of *Mirabilis*, (*Inst. Rei. Herb.* 130,) and this erroneous idea was also adopted by Lemery in the second edition of his great work on drugs, where he figures a *mirabilis* as the true jalap plant.

Notwithstanding the weight of an opinion from such a source, Miller, (*Gard. Dict.*) and Sloane, (*Hist. Jamaica*,) again referred the jalap to *convolvulus*, and their statement was confirmed by Houston, who brought the plant from South America and showed it to Jussieu, who decided that it belonged to that genus.

Linnaeus, however, in the first edition of his *materia medica* still adhered to the opinion of Tournefort, and attributes it to the *Mirabilis longiflora*. Some years afterwards he recognised his error and placed it in the genus *convolvulus*, with the following specific characters:

C. jalapa, foliis difformibus cordatis, angulatis, oblongis, luneculatisque, pedunculis unifloris, seminibus lanigeris.

But the subject still remained in uncertainty. Murray, (*App. Med.* i. 216,) on the authority of Thierry de Menonville, started the idea that there might be more than one species of *convolvulus*, furnishing the official jalap. The latter writer stated that he found a species near Vera Cruz, which he affirmed to be the true jalap, and the roots of which weighed twenty-five pounds. He drew up a description of this plant which he transmitted to Jussieu and Desfontaines, this latter botanist, on comparing the description of De Menonville with that of the *Ipomœa macrorrhiza* of Michaux, specimens of which were growing in the Garden of Plants at Paris, was convinced that they were identical; hence when Michaux discovered the latter in Florida and sent the seeds to Paris, Desfontaines published a memoir on jalap, (*Ann. du Mus.* ii. 220,) in which he ascribed this drug to the *I. microrrhiza*, and gave the *C. jalapa* of all preceding botanists as synonymous. The accuracy of this was first doubted by Mr. Nuttall, (*Gen. N. Am. Pl.* i. 123,) on the authority of Dr. Baldwin, who from actual experiment found that the *I. macrorrhiza* was inert, and better fitted for an esculent than for a medicine.

In 1827, Dr. Coxe having received roots of the true jalap from South America, became convinced that the descriptions of former authors were erroneous, and in 1830 published a full account of it in the *American Journal of Medical Sciences*. In 1829 also, Mr. Ledanois sent a short description of the same plant to Mr. Chevallier at Paris, thus confirming the discovery of Dr. Coxe.

The description given by Mr. Ledanois differs in a few unimportant particulars from that by Dr. Coxe, but it is evident that they both were drawn up from the same species,

Thus Mr. Ledanois states that the leaves are smooth, without prominent veins,

whereas in the plant of Dr. Coxe, the nervures on the under side of the leaf are strongly marked, &c. &c.

Mr. Pelletan proposes to call this species *Convolvulus officinalis*, and we are of opinion that his suggestion is a good one on many accounts.

The name *C. jalapa*, it is evident, leads to much confusion and uncertainty, from its having been applied to many totally distinct plants. Thus the *C. jalapa* of Linnæus, the description of which approaches nearest to the present plant, may or may not be identical with it, but as it has been quoted as a synonyme for other and confessedly different species, it would be better to consider it as not yet identified by more modern botanists.

The *C. jalapa* of Woodville, judging from his representation of it, differs in many essential particulars, and as is justly observed by Mr. Nuttall, resembles one of the varieties of *C. panduratus*.¹ Neither is it the *C. jalapa*, *Bol. Mag. Hort. Kew.* i. 211. *Willd.* i. 860, &c., as these evidently refer to the *C. macrorhiza* of Michaux, figured as above mentioned by Desfontaines in the *Ann. du Mus.*

As to the point in dispute, whether the plant in question is an *Ipomœa* or a *Convolvulus*, it is a matter of little importance. Botanists are by no means in unison as to what are the distinctive characters of each, and many have rejected the former entirely, or considered it as merely entitled to the rank of a subgenus.

Tournefort founds his differential character on the form of the Corolla, whilst Linnæus considers this as of a secondary importance, and assumes the form of the stigma as the distinguishing mark, in which he is followed by Jussieu and others. If this be adopted as a guide, instead of dividing *Convolvulus* into two genera only, we must erect a new genus for every different form of this part, and thus split up an otherwise natural group into a dozen or more sections. If a division be adopted, that proposed by Kunth of *Staminibus exsertis, inæqualibus*, and *Staminibus inclusis*, is the best, as it brings together those species which are most closely allied in other particulars; but even this plan offers many difficulties and anomalies.

Before concluding this notice, it should be mentioned that Mr. Nuttall stated to us, that he still entertained doubts whether the plant described by Dr. Coxe was the true *jalapa*, as he had found the tubers grown at Cambridge, Mass., were devoid of active properties. As this is not the case with those produced in this city, the objection is scarcely valid, but at the same time, the fact is highly interesting in itself, as showing the effect of climate or cultivation in modifying the properties of vegetables.—*Journ. of Phil. Coll. of Pharmacy, July, 1834.*

Dartmouth College.—The number of medical students in this institution in October last, was 106. The following are the requisites for graduation:—

"Each candidate for the degree of M. D. must be twenty-one years of age; must possess a good moral character, an acquaintance with *natural and experimental philosophy*, and a knowledge of the *principles and construction of the Latin language*; must have studied medicine three full years with some regular practitioner; must have attended two courses of public lectures in all the branches of the profession, at a regularly organized medical institution, one of which courses shall have been attended at this institution; must have passed a successful private examination before the medical faculty, and have read and defended in their presence an acceptable dissertation on some medical subject."

Medical Institution of Geneva College, New York.—The trustees of Geneva College have established a medical department, and appointed the following professors.

Dr. EDWARD CUTBUSH,	Professor of <i>Chemistry.</i>
Dr. WILLARD PARKER,	" <i>Anatomy and Physiology.</i>
Dr. J. G. MORGAN,	" <i>Surgery.</i>
Dr. C. B. COVENTRY,	" <i>Obstetrics and Materia Medica.</i>
Dr. A. COLEMAN,	" <i>Medical Jurisprudence and Botany.</i>